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PROVIDENCE
Bringing
Good out of Evil,
IN A
SERMON,

PREACHED

On the Ninth of *September*, being the Day
of Thanksgiving for the Discovery of the
late Treasonable Conspiracy against His
Majesties Person and Government.

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St. Michaels Crooked-Lane.

L O N D O N,

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PSAL. LXXVI. 10.

*Surely the Wrath of Man shall Praise
Thee, &c.*

WHOEVER was the Author of this *Psalm* (which seems to have been Composed, not by *David*, but some other Holy Writer after his time) or to whatsoever particular History it may more immediately relate; thus much is however most certain, from the very Genius and Contexture of the *Psalm*, that the occasion of its Composition was some signal Victory and remarkable Deliverance, by which God was pleased to rescue his People out of the hands of their Powerful Enemies; and that it was Penned also for the standing Use and Comfort of God's Church, in all such Circumstances. And accordingly, after the Divine Author has Magnifi'd God's wonderful Power and Wisdom from the Representation of his so remarkable rescue of his

People, in that particular Defeat of their Enemies, he falls at last upon this general Conclusion here in my Text; *Surely the wrath of Man shall Praise Thee*—

From which Words I shall take occasion to doe these two Things.

First, I shall consider the Truth of the Proposition, and what sufficient Grounds we have to be assured in the General, that all the outrageous Actions of wicked and ungodly Men, are, by that Over-ruling Providence which knows how to bring Good out of Evil, constantly forced (quite contrary to the designs and intents of the Persons so Acting) towards the accidental Promotion of God's Glory, and the good of his Church. I shall endeavour to shew Breifly, what sufficient grounds of Reason we have to be assured of this in the General, even though we had no such clear Examples of the thing, nor were able to give any account of the particular manner how this should come to pass.

Secondly, For our more abundant satisfaction in so comfortable a Truth, I shall endeavour, by the help of Scripture, more particularly to demonstrate some of the cheif ways

and

and manners how the outrageous actions and wicked enterprises of the Enemies of Religion are at last forced to turn to God's Praise, and the real Benefit of his faithful People.

First, I am to consider the Truth of the Proposition, and what sufficient grounds we have to be assured of this in the general, though we had no clear Examples of the thing, nor were able to give any account of the particular manner how this should come to pass. That it is, that it must be so in the general, and cannot be otherwise, we have as much, we have the same Reason to be certain of, as we have that there is a God who Governs the World, a Supreme absolutely perfect Being that Rules and Disposes all Events so as is most agreeable to such the Essential Perfection of his Nature. So that as sure as God is Infinitely Wise, and therefore infallibly knows what will, and what will not, make for his own Glory and the good of his Church; as sure as he is Infinitely Good and holy, and so willing to promote the same; as sure as he is Infinitely powerful, so that he can easily bring about whatsoever he desires, and not onely hinder but perfectly

annihilate whatever other Being goes to resist him? no less sure is it, that neither Man nor Devil (let their Malice and cursed Purposes be what they will) are ever suffered to proceed to outward Act, to put any thing in Execution, but only what God can and does so Over-rule by his Providence, as that it shall be subservient to his own Holy and Wise ends, and be actually made use of by him, sooner or later, so as to turn to his Glory, and the real advantage of his faithful Servants. Very remarkable to this purpose is that great saying of St. *Augustin*; God, who is the Supream Governour and disposer of all things, would by no means suffer any Evil to be in the World, were he not so Infinitely Wise and Good and Powerful as to make Evil it self become beneficial, by bringing good out of it. God's Infinite Power and Providence Over-rules and sets Bounds to the Rage of the Devil and all his wicked Instruments; so that while they Persecute and Designe utterly to destroy God's People, and though severall of Christ's Members may, for the present, suffer under their Rage, God in his Infinite Wisdom so Restrains them, that they can go no farther than

than accidentally tends to the real advantage of his Church in general. They build up and strengthen what they would destroy ; their own designs contradict and recoil upon themselves, and, in the event, defeat their own Intentions. The Devil himself is forced, against his will, to doe God's Work, and to promote his Glory, while he intends nothing less. The Rage of Man turns to God's Praise, and as for the remainder of wrath which would not do so, which cannot be made use of nor converted to this purpose, God is sure always to restrain it, and never suffers it to take effect by putting its designs in Execution. Howsoever unprofitable or destructive the wicked actions of Men may be to themselves who commit them, and howsoever immediatly offensive to God and contrary to his Will the irregularity and immorality of the same is ; yet when the thing is done, God is sure to make some good use of it, and to have his own Will out of the very worst action that Men commit, and would not otherwise ever permit it to be done. It's impossible indeed, that we poor, weak, finite Creatures should be able, in a Thousand Instances of this Nature, to discover the
 parti-

particular manner how this should be brought about : but God sees not as Man sees ; he beholds things at once and together ; he is perfectly well acquainted with all the several circumstances, connexion, and dependences of things upon each other. He sees what will be the last end of such or such an Adversary ; what influence the alterations he is permitted to work will have, and upon what Persons , and how far distant ; how many Years, or (sometimes) Ages after, the benefit will accrue. Of all this now, and a Thousand other Circumstances we are wholly ignorant and unable to consider. So that we must needs be much to seek concerning the particular manner how God will bring Good out of such an Evil ; but yet that he will do so in the general, we can no more question, than we can doubt of God's Goodness, Omniscience and Omnipotence ; that is , whether there be indeed a God. If we be satisfied of this, we shall also find Reason to conclude, *That all things* (that is, all Afflictions and Persecutions, which are the effects of other Mens Wrath) *shall work together for good to them that love God ; and that the Wrath of Man shall turn to*
God's

Gods Praise, though we were not furnished with so many Examples of the thing, nor were enabled to give any account at all, concerning the manner how this should be brought to pass.

But Secondly, For our more abundant satisfaction in so comfortable a Truth, I shall, in the next place, endeavour more particularly to demonstrate some of the cheif ways and several manners how the outrageous Actions and wicked enterprises of the Enemies of Religion are, at last, forced to turn to the Divine Praise, and the real benefit of God's faithful People.

And this may come to pass, First, As such ruggid dealings with them, tends more effectually to antidote them from being tainted and infected with the Errours and Corruptions of such Enemies. For, should wicked Men and false Worshippers, ceasing to Persecute the true Professours, allow them fair quarter, and behave themselves kindly and courteously towards them, there would then be far more danger of their being seduced and enticed to partake of the same Abominations, and to enter upon such a familiarity as might prove very destructive,
and

and of the worst consequence. But now, the many injuries and ill turns which the Enemies of the Truth do usually offer to the Godly, That Rage against them, and Hatred, which they are ready upon all occasions to shew, is generally in it self, a very powerful security from the former danger. And this may be (among many others) one good Reason why God is pleas'd to permit those that are born after the Flesh, to malign, and Persecute those that are born after the Spirit, viz. that thereby, they might be free from the many Temptations and occasions of seduction, which might attend a familiarity with such Men: and be less subject to take the Infection of their Errours and bad Examples; so that if no other good did accidentally come to us, from the Rage of such Men, this is certainly to be lookt upon as no small advantage.

But Secondly, The Rage of such Persons is forced to turn to God's Praise, as Persecutions tend to correct the failings of good Men, and to exercise and illustrate their several Graces and Virtues. By these, good Men are usually made much better and more approved, while they tend to exercise our
 Patience,

Patience, to quicken our Devotion, to Evidence our Zeal and Christian Fortitude, and to shew to the whole World what Love we bear to the Truth, and how much we are willing to undergo for the Honour of God. Till they have suffered something for it. Truth is too apt to grow Cheap and be less priz'd many times, even by those that are good Men, for the main; whereas we are Apt on the contrary, never to value it at a higher Rate, or to be more Zealous for it, nor to make better use of it, than when it is opposed and persecuted. What more truly Beneficial therefore or tending to the Divine Glory, than for God; Who useth to bring Good out of Evil; To make use also of the Opposers of his Truth, to Rouse up his Servants, whom he sets growing more Remiss and Negligent than they should be, and so Suffer such Temptations to assault them, by which their Drowsie Minds may be Spurred on into a greater Love and Zeal for the Truth, and a deeper Sense of the Divine Benefit in it, and in general, Excited to the more Diligent performance of their Duty. In short, so un-able are Men generally to bear long prosperity, without being the worse for it, and of

such Excellent use is Adversity to Purge away the ill Humours, which the best Men are too Apt to contract, that God sees it highly convenient, for the general good of his Servants, sometimes to make use of this Method; and does therefore ever and anon, within some few Ages, permit ill Men to become the Rods and Instruments of Correction to his People; and use them as Pruning-Hooks in his Vineyard.

Outward Trials and Adversities do usually most of all promote the true inward Spiritual Prosperity of God's Church. Nor does any thing conduce more, either to restore it, or to keep it Sound and in Health, than the due Exercises and Breathings of Persecution. I shall Conclude this particular, with that Notable passage of St. Hieron, who in one of his Books has these Words; *Scribere disposui, si tamen Dominus vitam dederit, &c.* I determine with my self, (if God shall give me Life) to write a History from the coming of our Saviour, to our present Times; that is, from the Times of the Apostles to the Dregs of this Age; in which I design to shew at large, how, and by whom the Church of God was Replenished; how it was still en-
creased

creased by Persecutions, and crowned by Martyrdoms; and when it came to Christian Princes, How strangely it was diminished in Virtue, while it encreased in Riches and Ease, in External Power and Prosperity.

Thirdly, Another manner after which the Wrath of Man is forced to turn to God's Praise is, when he makes the very Execution of the Malice of Wicked Men against his Servants, become the Effectual means, or occasion of promoting their welfair, and of bringing about that very good thing, which the other desired and designed, thereby, to hinder. And now, as there are few good Men, I'm perswaded, who diligently observe and take Notice of God's Providential dealings and wise disposal of Things, but can readily find some happy Instances of this, in their own Experience, either in Relation to themselves, or some other of their acquaintance; so shall we not fail (however) of meeting with variety of Examples of this kind; in Holy Scripture. Thus while the Envy and Malice of *Josephs* Bretheren moved them to sell him to the *Ishmgelites*, out of a design to prevent and hinder that Exaltation of his, which had been signified to him in a Dream,

God was pleased, in his wonderful Providence, so to order all Circumstances, as that they thereby put him into the direct Rode of his Preferment, and far more Effectually (tho Ignorantly indeed and full contrary to their own Will) contributed thereto, than if they had all laid their Heads together and Studied most industriously how to Effect the same. And accordingly *Joseph* was so thorowly Sensible of Gods Over-ruling Providence and Gracious design, from the very first, in permitting them to put their Wicked design in Execution, that he calls their Selling of him by the Name of Gods sending him into *Egypt* *Gen. 45. 5.* Be not Angry with your selves, that you Sold me; For God sent me before you, to preserve Life. And *Gen. 50. 20.* As for you, you thought Evil against me, but God meant it unto Good. And thus also whilst Wicked *Pharaoh*, contriving how to hinder the Children of *Israel* from so Multiplying and growing so mighty, as that they might at last depart from him, by a strong Hand, and cast off the Yoak from them, Commands his People to cast all the Male-Children of the *Hebrews* into the River, God was pleased to make use of this very de-

cree of the Bloudy Tyrant, as the Happy means and occasion, not only of *Moses* Preservation and Preferment, but also of the whole Peoples Deliverance. For, with him, in an Ark of Bul-Rushes, Swims also the whole Fortune of *Israel*, and certainly Arrives at a safe Harbour. And little did *Pharaoh* think that this Command of his should prove an Effectual Recommendation of that very Person to the Care of his own Compassionate Daughter, and help him to the Education of his own Court, who should thereby be better prepared and qualified to become the Prince and Leader of the People *Israel*; and prove at last the happy Instrument to Effect that Deliverance, which the Tyrant endeavoured so much to prevent. And so afterwards, though *Pharaoh* designed nothing but the securing them to himself for ever, by dispiriting of that People, and keeping them under in the hardest Bondage; God was graciously pleased to permit this Oppression for a while, as a good means (and perhaps the only Effectual one,) to prepare and make them willing to follow *Moses*, and to forsake the Land of *Egypt* and those Habitations, which long Time and Custom had so much endeared

endeared to them. And we may easily guess how very hardly they could ever have been perswaded to have thought of any such thing, had they but been suffered to enjoy any Tolerable Condition among the *Egyptians*; when, notwithstanding all their former Extream hard usage, and miraculous Deliverance, and when, notwithstanding their being Fed with most Delicious Manna in the Wilderness, and the hopes of Possessing a Land Flowing with Milk and Hony, they could yet, after all this, find in their Hearts to hanker after the Flesh-Pots, and pine for the Garlick and Onyons of *Egypt*, and wish that they had Lived and Died there.

But to proceed to other Instances; what can we think of *Saul's* Envy and Rage against *David*, the many hazardous employments he put him upon, and the attempts he made to destroy and hinder him from Succeeding him? what were all these, but as so many several steps which providence made use of, to mount him to the Throne? while they serv'd effectually to make him both more gracious and renowned among the people, and more fit and better qualified to Reign ovre them. In short, all *Saul's* Rage against him

him served only to make a more speedy way, for *David*, while the other ran furiously upon his own destruction, in opposing him.

Again, how little did Saint *Paul* think, whilst yet *Saul*, and breathing out Threatnings and Persecution against Christians, that by permitting him so to Rage, God was fitting him to become a more Eminent Instrument for the propagation of the Christian Faith: and that his so Persecuting should afterwards prove a most effectual means to confirm and build up that Church which he designed, thereby, to destroy? And yet, is not the consideration of so violent a Persecutour, all of a sudden, converted into the stoutest Champion, an undeniable Evidence of the reality of his miraculous Conviction, by Christs speaking to him from Heaven; and so both enough, of it self, to convince, or confound the obstinate *Jews* then, and to be always a standing irrefragable Argument, to all Posterity that well consider it, of the Truth and Divinity of the whole Christian Religion in general? I shall give onely one Instance more of this kind, whereas I might be yet numerous. The greatest wickedness that ever was committed

mitted by the Sons of Men, proved an occasion of the greatest glory to God, and of the most singular benefit that could befall Mankind. I need not tell you, that I mean the putting to Death of our blessed Saviour, towards the effecting of which, whilst *Judas* was moved out of forded Covetousness; the Scribes and Pharises and cheif Priests, out of implacable Malice and Envy; *Pontius Pilate*, out of base Ambition and fear of offending *Cæsar*; and others, to satisfie other vile ends of their own; God was pleased to permit all these sinful motions of the several Persons therein concerned, and to order such a concurrence of circumstances, as that nothing should hinder them from putting their wicked design in execution; God himself making use of them, as Instruments, for the effecting of his own most holy and gracious purposes therein.

Fourthly, (which seems also to be the most direct Meaning and Relation of my Text) The Wrath of Man turns, at last, to God's Praise, while it gives occasion unto all of magnifying and admiring the Divine Power, Wisdom and Goodness towards his Servants, in restraining the force of their Persecutors;

in wonderfully supporting and preserving them under their Pressures, and in his remarkable Deliverances of them out of all their Dangers, by the total Defeat and Overthrow of their Adversaries. Thus the Fury of *Nebuchadnezzar*, which caused the Furnace to be heated Seven times hotter than usual, what did it else effect or serve for, but only to make God's Glory shine so much the brighter, in his Miraculous Preservation of the Three Childeren? by which, as they became Living Martyrs, so does the consideration of the same, force the *Haughty Monarch* to become himself a kind of Confessor, and extort from him this Notable Magnificat and Acknowledgment, *Dan. 3. 28.* Then *Nebuchadnezzar* spake and said, *Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Mithach and Abednego, &c.* So while the Malitious Prefidents endeavoured to destroy *Daniel*, by getting him cast into the Den of Lions, what did they procure thereby, but the Prophets greater Exaltation and Favour with the King, and the utter Ruin of themselves and their whole Families? And what an occasion did it prove of God's being generally Glorified, while, in consideration of the so Miraculous

Deliverance, King *Darius* makes this following Decree and Acknowledgment, *Dan. 6. 26.* *That in every Dominion of his Kingdom, Men should Tremble and Fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the Living God, and Stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his Dominion shall be ever unto the End. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh Signs and Wonders, in Heaven, and in Earth.* I might also remind you of the History of Proud *Pharaoh*, whose Insolence and Prodigious Obstinacy had at last such a Conclusion, and his in Rage against God's People procured him so Miraculous an over-throw, as that he was (though unwillingly) the occasion of more Glory unto God, than, perhaps, any the most Religious Prince, by his greatest Piety. I might also Instance in the Wonderful Defeat of *Senacherib's* Numerous Army; which, as it was (probably) the occasion of this Triumphant *Psalms* in general, so may it serve likewise as a standing Monument of the Truth of my Text in particular. Which I might have still illustrated, by some farther considerations: but I proceed rather to a particular Application, in reference to the present occasion.

occasion. In the Management of which I shall confine my self to these Two Generals,

First, I shall briefly consider the Horrour and Hainousness of that late Barbarous Conspiracy, which the Hellish Wrath and Fury of Phanatick Spirits engaged them to enter into, against the Life of our Dread Sovereign, and for the destruction of all his Faithful Adherents, their Bretheren and Fellow-Subjects, who were at quiet in the Land.

Secondly, I shall endeavour to shew how the Cursed Designs and Attempts of this their Rage against us, thus clearly discovered and Miraculously defeated, may Naturally tend, by the Divine Grace and Blessing, to the Praise and Glory of God, and the real welfare and singular Benefit of this Church and Nation.

As to the First of these, In considering of this Conspiracy, I shall not think it needful to go about to shew the certainty of the thing itself; which has been so abundantly proved, by all sorts of Evidence, that indeed nothing of this Nature is capable of more, or better; nor could there have been made a more clear Discovery or Confirmation, unless by the

Actual Accomplishment of so Damnable a Design. One of the Accomplices, out of meer Guilt and Horrour of Conscience, lays Violent Hands upon himself; very many of the rest Fly, as afraid to stand the Just Trial of our Laws; and those who have been Condemned and Suffered for the Crime, have all of them confest the Thing, in General. In short, there's no Man, I'm perswaded, will pretend in the least to question or disbelieve it, but only such Persons; who themselves full well know it to be true, and could also, if they pleased, give us their own Evidence in the Case. I cannot think it requisite neither, that I should much Add the part of an Historian, by endeavouring to represent all the matter of Fact (so far as yet discovered) or give you a Compleat Scheme of the whole Contrivance, since this hath been done already Sufficiently, by Reading to you the King's Declaration.

I shall pretend no farther at present, but only breifly to remark, and Point out to you some few of the many Aggravating Circumstances of this Conspiracy, and such as are big with the foulest Deformity, the blackest Horrour and Ingratitude.

And

And here I might first remark the Monstrous Impudence of these vile Miscreants, who were not ashamed thus, in the same Age, and by the same Ways and Methods, to attempt the Destruction of the Son, by which they had before Ruined his Father of ever Blessed Memory; that they should so far Affront their own Reason, and bid such defiance to Heaven it self, as to dare to design upon the Life of a Prince so abundantly forewarned so signalized by the particular Care of Providence, so wonderfully Restored, so all along preserved, by almost a continued Series of Miracles. I might also remind you of the no less Monstrous Ingratitude of these wicked Wretches, both toward God and His Sacred Majesty. For several of the chief Conspirators, were such as had been raised to their Height, by His Majesties special Favour and Bounty, such upon whom he had heaped Honours, or Obliged by the greatest Benefits; and yet nothing was enough to Satisfie their Greedy Covetousness and Ambition. And most of those who were to be the main Instruments in this black Tragedy, were such as had been in Arms, and so active in the former Rebellion, as that they had long ago received

received according to their Deserts, had it not been for the wonderful Clemency of the Kings Act of Oblivion. And yet these scrupled not, in requital, to deprive him of Life, who had so graciously given them their own.

I might tell you how they first prepared the way for a general Rebellion, by bespattering and disabling the Kings most Faithful Subjects, and representing all his firm Friends under the Odious Character of Papists, and Popishly Affected; by raising Tumults, Riots, and Sedition; by continually sending forth whole Swarms of the most false and Venomous Libels; by every where spreading Fears and Jealousies; by the most Malicious Lies and Slanders; by the most Horrid Perjuries and Subornations. In short, by so Obstructing the due Course of the Laws themselves, and Debauching the Execution of them to their own vile purposes, through the Corruption of some Officers, that Loyalty was made the only Crime to be punished, and none so sure to go free, and be applauded too, as those who had made themselves, in the highest manner, Obnoxious to the Government. And when at last a stop was put to these proceedings, so that they perceived they could

could not, by these Methods, so speedily Effect what they Designed; then they contrive presently how to Murder the King and his Royal Brother, after the most Barbarous manner, and to follow that with a General Massacre of all the most Loyal Nobility and Gentry of the Land. And, which still heightens this Villany even to Astonishment, all these black Designs were underhand promoted and carried on, by the pretence of Zeal for the Protestant Religion, under colour of Securing the Kings Person, and the Prevention of Popery and Arbitrary Government.

Thus, had not God's Miraculous Providence prevented, when once the Fatal Blow had been stricken, and all the King's Faithful Subjects Butchered, the Conspiratours (of so different Parties and Opinions that nothing now Unites them, but their Common Hatred against, and desire to destroy the present Government) would then most certainly have soon quarrel'd among themselves, and a new Scene of Bloud and Confusion have followed, till at last this miserable Land weakened, to so high a degree, with her own unnatural Convulsions, must in all probability, have become an easie Prey to a Foreign

reign Conquerour; and so that Popery and Slavery have been indeed Introduced, which these Men all along so much only pretended to Fear. For let such Men talk what they will, I cannot think that they are really afraid of Popery; but are glad only to Create, and then manage and promote the Fears of it, in order to the Destruction of our Established Religion and Government; which they seem to hate far worse than Popery it self. As to their Loyalty towards Princes, I'm sure, ther's no great difference betwixt the Principles of a Phanatick, and of a Jesuit. They are both well enough agreed about the thing it self, and Quarrel only, which of them should have the sole priviledg of Murdering Princes. And in this last Plot, they thought (as 'tis usual said) to wrong the very Devil; and have indeed thereby made themselves far worse than the very worst Papiſts, by designing to Murther the King themselves, and then to cast it, and pretend to revenge it, upon them, and all those they should think fit to brand with that Character. By which unparallel'd Villany, they seem, at last, to have found out a new Expedient, to Rid this Land of Jesuits; who may now think

think themselves so perfectly out done in their own Trade, as, perhaps, out of meer shame and dispare of ever equalizing these, they may resolve to shew their Heads here no more. But however, let them do what they please; this Conspiracy is, in it self, such a Master-Peice of all Iniquity, such a Monstrous Complication of the greatest Villany, as cannot but Astonish all those who consider it, at present, and will, perhaps, scarcely gain Credit with Posterity, that ever any Humane Creatures should be capable of such Degeneracy from their Nature. In the mean time, it is to be hoped, that the same God, (whose Infinite Wisdom useth to bring Good out of Evil, and who has been pleased, in greatest Mercy, to prevent so sad Desolation) will also turn the Discovery of this Plot, to his own Glory, and the lasting Peace and Security of this Kingdom.

Which brings me now to the Second General thing I was to endeavour to shew, viz. How, the Cursed Designs and Attempts of this their Rage against us, thus clearly discovered and Miraculously defeated, may Naturally tend, by the Divine Grace and Blessing, to the Praise and Glory of God, and

to the Real Welfare, and Singular Benefit, of this Church and Nation.

And to this Excellent purpose now, it tends, as it may Justly serve, to strike Terror and Confusion into the Hearts of all those who have been any ways concerned in, or Abettors and Promoters of this Unnatural Conspiracy; who may well be moved, from hence, with deepest Shame and Sorrow, to consider and reflect upon what they have done; what extream Folly and Madness they have been guilty of; and forever be deterred, for the future, from undertaking or engaging themselves in any such wicked Enterprize. Whilst, from the Consideration of the so remarkable Detection and Baffle of their Designs, together with the Just and Exemplary Punishment of several of their Fellow-Criminals, they are Furnished with a most sensible Argument and Demonstration of the Vanity of such Attempts, and what a tender Care and watchful Eye, Providence has for the Security and Preservation of his own Vicegerents; so that the Counsels and Attempts of such as go about to Violate the Persons of their Lawful Princes and Governours, are Commonly Vain and Unsuccessful; their
Wrath.

Wrath proves, at last, Impotent, and Destructive only to themselves; they do but Fight against God himself, in *divising how to put him out whom God will Exalt.* And indeed, our present Sovereign has been so often and remarkably preserved, and, from this last Conspiracy, by such an Astonishing, and (almost) Unparallel'd Instance of the Divine Providence, that it may seem hard even for the most *Atheistical* Spirit, not to be Convinced thereby; and should be enough to strike such an Awe into the Minds of all those who have any remaining Sparks of Religion, or the least Suspicion of a Deity, that, for the time to come, one would think it should be altogether as Impossible to find any willing to Attempt, as it has proved hitherto to Effect, His Destruction. And this very Consideration of God's so Wonderfully interposing to blast their Hellish Plot, Just when they had made all so sure, that in all Humane Judgment, it was Impossible for them to fail of Effecting it, had such a strange Influence upon the mind of one of the Conspirators, that (according to his own Confession) he was ready to relent, and give over thereupon. Nor could he have prevailed with himself to

have gon on, against such a Flaming Sword as stood in the way to deter him, had it not been for the Company and Encouragement of a far more false and wicked Prophet than *Balaam*, who so Thirsted after Royal Bloud, and the Rewards of Unrighteousness, that he could neither see nor hear any thing, but soon stopt the Mouth of his Creature that talkt to him of going back, and Spurred him on again, by a most Impious and Presumptuous Misinterpretation of that Wonderful Providence, which ought to have deterred them.

If such true Protestants had but as much Religion as the great *Turk* (whose cause they so much Favour at present, and wish for his Success against Christians) they would, from the consideration of God's so strange and remarkable Deliverances of our King, Learn, if not (as 'tis said that *Barbarian* does) to Entertain a high esteem of his Majesty, yet at least out of mere despair of Success, (especially after this last Defeat,) to be afraid to think any more of lifting up their Hands against Him. Treason, I confess, has in it such a Complication of other greivous Sins, and the main Contrivers and chief Agitators

of it, have usually such strangely Debauched Understandings, and Hardened Hearts, by a long Custom in other Sins against Conscience, that though, through the Prince's Clemency, they Escape and be Pardoned again and again; yet they seldom truly Repent, or leave off their Disloyal Practices; scarce any Defeats are Sufficient to Discourage them; but still, as soon as ever they think they have an Opportunity, they enter upon Fresh Conspiracies; and when they come at last to Suffer for their Crimes, scarce any sort of Sinners seem to be more left to themselves, and a Reprobate Sense, or may be generally observed to go out of the World, with less Sign of any true Penitence. And I wish the Observation had not been too much verified in the Behaviour of those Traytors, who Suffered for the late Conspiracy.

They shewed themselves more Solicitous not to Discover their Accomplices, than others might still have an Opportunity to carry on the Work, which themselves fail'd of, than about any great Sorrow for, or a Detestation of their own Crimes. And I could wish too, that most of our Dissentors did not, both by their Talk and Behaviour, still shew them

themselves (as far as they dare) so much well-wishers to the accursed Cause. But yet I hope that many, even of those who have been deeply enough concerned in the General, and would have been ready to have approved of the thing, had it Succeeded, will yet now take occasion, from the so Wonderful Defeat of the Horrid Design, to review those accursed Opinions and Principles, which moved them to be so much concerned; and so being more Sensible of their Duty, and Heartily sorry for the Breach of it, become for the Future truly Loyal and Obedient Subjects. By which means, the Defeated Wrath of our Adversaries, will turn (as it Naturally tends) to God's Praise, and not a little to the Benefit of these Nations.

But Secondly, Though all of the chief Actors, who know themselves directly concerned in the Treason, should still (which God forbid) continue Obstinate and Impenitent; yet the Wrath of these Men will still accidentally tend to God's Praise, and the good of the Church and Common-Wealth, in as much as the so clear Discovery and Prevention of the Conspiracy must needs open the Eyes of all Impartial and well-meaning Men

Men, who were before apt to entertain too good an Opinion, and subject to be drawn aside with the fair pretences of these cunning Incendiaries and Seducers. When once Honest Men come plainly to understand what they would be at, that under the pretence of Zeal for Religion, and God's Glory, they Harbour nothing but Worldly Interest, Covetousness, and Cruelty, and make Liberty a meer Cloak for Maliciousness, for Rapine, Treason, and Rebellion; they are then Sufficiently Antidoted and Secured against the Poisonous Infusions of their Destructive Principles. God has been pleased, once more, to Suffer these vile Hypocrites abundantly to unmask themselves, to proceed so far, as to shew their Wolves Teeth from under the covering of the Sheepskin, though they have not now been permitted to Bite. They have now so plainly discovered to the World their Bloudy Nature, that all Sincere hearted Persons Will beware of such false Prophets, and equally abhor their Practices, and the Cursed Principles which lead to them. Men will Suffer themselves to be no more afrighted out of their Christianity and Allegiance, into some of the worst Errours of

Popery, and into the immediate Danger of Perpetual Slavery and Confusion, by the Mere Fears of Popery and Arbitrary Government. Can any Man, who has the least Conscience, himself, any longer believe these to be Men of tender Consciences, who can thus strain at a Gnat, and Swallow a Camel; that can startle at the use of an Innocent Ceremony, and yet be so far from making the least Scruple at the Horrid Murder of their most Gracious Prince, and the most Barbarous Massacre of their Fellow-Subjects, that ever was Designed, as, on the contrary, to count it an Action most Heroick and highly Meritorious? Must not he himself be perfectly out of his own Wits, who can any more be tempted to think, these Men and their Favourers, to be the only Sober, Godly party of the Nation, merely, because they have the Modesty to call themselves so? After a Plot of this Horrid Complexion, so clearly Discovered, so Miraculously Defeated, a Plot in which the whole Body of Dissenters seem to have been, more or less, Engag'd, & which so Evidently proceeded from the Poison of Phanatical Principles, one would think the main Ring-leaders should now give

over of their own accord; so that meer Shame and Despair (I had they not long ago quite forgotten how to Blush) should be Sufficient, without any other Law or Magistrate, to suppress their Seditious Conventicles, those Schools of Hipocrisie and Rebellion; or, at least, that they should now be forced to give over the Trade, merely for want of Customers. The Implacable Wrath and Villanous Attempts of these Men, have done enough to enlighten the Understandings, and open the Eyes of all Men, who have any; so that it now seems scarcely possible that any should be longer deceived by them, who are not resolved to deceive themselves; their Fault can no longer be excused, by any such thing as Ignorance: but must be Attributed to the most Affected Malice and Obstinacy.

Whilst all Men who have any Sense of Religion left in them, any Love to their King or Country, any Regard to the Welfare of their own Souls, or Bodys, will be careful to avoid the Masters of such Infectious Assemblies; and returning again to the Bosom of the Church from which they have so wickedly departed, joyn with other Faithful Christians, in the sincere Worship of God,

and in Honouring and Obeying of the King,
and Live together with us in Peace, in Uni-
ty and Brotherly Love.

Than which, what can tend more to the
Praise of God, or the Benefit and Edification
of the Church?

And if any shall still be so Stupidly weak,
or Prodigiously Obstinate, as to be willing
to run after these Men, notwithstanding all
this; yet I hope, (which is the Third manner
how their Wrath may tend to God's Praise.)
that the late Attempts of these Men, will
Effectually awaken all Consciencious Ma-
gistrates, in their several Places, to put those
wholsom Laws in Execution, which the
Wisdom of our Governours has long since
provided in this Case. And I hope we are now
better acquainted with things, and with the
true meaning of both those Words, than that
any should still be afrighted from doing of
their Duty, by the Odious Name of *Per-
secution for Religion*; by which, such Male-
factors have all along endeavoured to discour-
age Men's Charitable Diligence in this kind.
We have formerly experienced, to our cost,
and have now again Learnt, with a Witness,
what such Men mean, by their Religion;
under

under the Specious pretence of which, they are used to Meditate nothing else but Violence and Rapine, Murder and Rebellion; any just Penalty upon, or necessary restraint of them from the Commission of which Crimes, they presently call by the Name of *Persecution for Religion*.

They that would disturb the Peace of a whole Nation, & endeavour to take away the Life of their Lawful Sovereign, are certainly Guilty of a Crime, of a far higher Nature, than they who Commit a Common Felony or Murder upon a Private Man: and yet these latter usually Suffer, without Pity; who (if they had but the same Impudence) might, with equal Right, pretend to Religion and Conscience in the Case, and cry out of Persecution too. And why should then the far greater Criminals be spared or Connived at, merely for such Impudent pretences, as indeed render them infinitely more Dangerous to the Common-Wealth, and more Justly Abominable both to God and Man? Such a Religion as this, (if it must needs be cal'd so) the Devil himself is of; *Who was a Murderer and a Lier from the Beginning*. So that with what Face can such Men say they are *Perse-*

cuted, meerly because they are restrained from truly Persecuting of others? whereas, for Magistrates not to endeavour to hinder them from this, by all Lawful Methods, would be indeed to Persecute, and (in Effect) to destroy all the most Faithful Subjects of the Land, by giving these Men an Opportunity to do so. And since our Schismatical Conventicles have ever proved themselves such Schools of Hypocrisie and never-failing Seed-Plots of Sedition and Rebellion, 'tis truly an Act, no less of the highest Charity, than Justice (for all those more immediately concerned by their Office) to endeavour, as they are Bound both by the Law of God and Man, and to use all due means, to suppress them. Which till it be Effectually done, in vain is it to hope for the least quiet, or to see good days in *England*. Why should Men, under the pretence of Religion, be Suffered to destroy it? Why should they be permitted to Poison the Minds of those, who might otherwise prove good Subjects and Christians, with Principles of Sedition and Disloyalty; to undo their Souls, and endanger the bringing of their Bodies to a shameful and untimely End; in a Word, to involve the whole

whole Nation in Ruin and Confusion, and to Propagate Schifin, and lay the Foundation of Blood and Massacres to all Posterity ? Nor shall I be afraid to say, that we well Remember, what Juncture of time it was, and by what kind of *Representatives*, and are now also Sensible upon what design, it was voiced *a thing greivous to the Subject to have Laws against Dissenters put in Execution.* Upon all which, and much more of the like Nature, the late Hellish Conspiracy has furnished us with such a lively Comment, as may justly awaken Magistrates, to put those very Laws in the most Vigorous Execution, as ever they desire the Preservation, either of the Religion or Government now Established.

And let such Men, who may thus *Suffer as Evil Doors*, cry out falsely of Persecution, as much as they please ; it is far better they should do so, than all Honest Men feel their Persecution indeed ; Which can no ways, likely, be prevented, but by such Timely and Legal Restraints of the Ring-leaders of the Faction.

And if the Discovery of this Damnable Plot might (as well it may) have this good Effect, the Wrath of our Adversaries would

(I make

(I make no Question) very much tend to God's Praise, and the lasting Peace, and Security of these Nations.

But however, in the Fourth Place, This Plot must needs prove of no inconsiderable Advantage; in as much as it has enabled us most clearly to distinguish, betwixt Persons; to know our True Friends from our Foes. It has been for the revealing of the Thoughts and Inclinations of many Mens Hearts; and hath Taught us Sufficiently both to discover and beware of a most Dangerous sort of Enemies among us, because False, Treacherous, and such pretended Friends to the Church and State. Such Masquerade Church of *England*-Men have now been Encouraged to cast off their Visards, and by their Behaviour in all the late Seditious Transactions, have Sufficiently betray'd their Hollow-Heartedness, and how ready they are, upon all Occasions, to warp, and (as one of them, who hath himself done so, Phraseth it) to *Play the Government a Slippery Trick*. These Men are so far only, of our Church, as may Enable them to do it more Mischeif, than if they were it's Professed Enemies; and seem indeed, for no other End, willing to

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Communicate with us at all, but only to Obtain a better Opportunity thereby of working our Destruction. And yet after they have joyned with the Dissenters in all their ill Designs against the Government, and happen at last (any of them) together with the other, to be Discovered and Punished for their Crime ; the whole Body of the Phana-ticks endeavour presently, from hence, to Acquit or Excuse themselves, by Impudent-ly shifting off the Reproach upon us ; giving out that it is not so much a Plot of the Dissenters, but such in which those of the Church of *England* also have been, at least, no less concerned.

But, God be thanked, as such Practices are wholly Inconsistent with our Principles, so Slander it self has not, cannot pretend to taint any true Son of our Church, as the least concerned in this Conspiracy. They must needs own, that they were their own true Fellow-Protestants only, that were in it ; not one Man of us, whom they wickedly call the Papists of the Church of *England*.

Thus we have been at length surpris'd with a True and most Excessive *Superlative*, that has, all along, lain Lurking, even in those

those who so much Pride themselves with the Title of *Moderate Men*; and we are well assured that, in whatsoever else they may answer that Name, they have not done so, even in the lowest and most *Moderate* degree (if any such their could be) of Honesty. And it is some Comfort to consider, that most others also of this Motley Tribe, who have not, perhaps, been directly concerned in this Conspiracy, have yet, by their greatly Favouring those that were so, and by their other ill Behaviour towards the Government in this Juncture, given such Sufficient Indications of their Falseness and Insincerity, that now all Men may easily see what they are; and our Governours both Civil and Ecclesiastical come plainly to understand what kind of Snakes we have hitherto Nourished in our Bosoms.

And certainly, as it is good that all Honest Men should know one another; so is it more-especially Advantagious to the Phblick, for those who are in Authority to be well acquainted, what Persons may safely be rely'd upon and encouraged, and who they are that can never be Oblig'd nor Trusted.

But Fifthly and Lastly, (which is indeed the

the more proper and immediate work of the Day.) This Wrath of theirs does turn to God's Praise, as the Discovery and Prevention of so Horrid a Design Administers a very Powerful Occasion, to all Sincere Christians, of Magnifying and Blessing God's Holy Name, and returning all Possible Praise and Thanks for so Wonderful a Deliverance. As the Consideration of this, may Justly move us to Admire and Adore God's Infinite Mercy and Goodness, his Faithfulness, Power, and the Incomprehensible Wisdom of his Providence ; *Who disappointeth the Devices of the Crafty, so that their Hands cannot perform their enterprize ; who taketh the Wise in their own Craftyness, so that the Counsel of the Forward is carried Head-long.*

It Tends likewise to God's Praise, as the Consideration of the same affords great Encouragement to all Faithful Persons, of proceeding on Cheerfully in the Regular ways which they have chosen ; of keeping closely to their Known Duty both towards God and Man ; Teaching them likewise not to be Frighted out of their Religion or Loyalty, by the Loud Clamours, Fears, or Threatnings of any unreasonable Men in a Prevailing Faction : but to rely firmly upon God's good Providence, in the Faithful discharge of their Duty ; we having, from hence, a Sensible Experiment and Example, how both able and willing God is to preserve the Simple, and ready, in his Good time, utterly to confound all the Machinations of Wicked Men against them ; so that there is no Preservative like to that of Integrity, *and he that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.* To conclude, it must needs much promote God's Glory, as the Consideration of it will Effectually move, all well disposed Persons among us, to express their Thankfulness to God, for so great a Deliverance, by Seriously endeavour-

ing to walk answerably to the Mercy ; by duly Reforming their Lives, and ordering their Conversations aright, and firmly resolving upon a more strict Obedience in all the Holy Laws of so Gracious, so Faithful and Bountiful Master.

This, this is the true Praise, the Genuine Fruit which God expects from us, and the particular Mercy so lowly calls for at our Hands ; and without which indeed we are delivered but to little purpose. But if we use our best Care, to let it have this due Effect upon our Hearts and Lives, we may then be most confident that the same God, who has been now our Rock and Defence, and mighty Salvation, will still be so. If their Defeated Wrath prove but thus to Gods Praise, in us ; we need not in the least Question, but that he who has, and does, will still deliver us. And let the same, or any other Enemies, continue to Plot, what they can, for our Ruin ; let them still bear never so Tyrannous a Hate against us ; yet the great Governour of the World will not fail to blast all their Designs, and the Remainder of their Wrath most certainly *Restrain*. Which God Grant of his Infinite Mercy, Through Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

Page 4. lin. 2. make (s) for (p) p. 9. l. 6. after *is* make (,) p. 9. last line but two, after *they* make (p) p. 18. l. 17. for *in Rage* read *outrage* p. 37. l. 18. for *doors* read *doers*.